REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-35 are pending in the present application. Claims 16 and 17 have been cancelled without prejudice and Claim 35 has been added by the present amendment.

The Advisory Action maintains the rejections of the Office Action of November 24, 2006. In the Office Action of November 24, 2006, Claims 16-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Rosenberg et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2002/0109668, herein "Rosenberg"), which is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Briefly recapitulating, independent Claim 18 is directed to a method for operating a haptic interface unit. The method includes, *inter alia*, providing a holding force mode in which an absolute force value of an interaction feedback force or a vectorial component thereof is increased in a position dependent form to a predetermined hold force value or above, if the respective velocity or a vectorial component thereof decreases below a given threshold minimum velocity value. The predetermined hold force value is larger than the interaction feedback force within the inverted damping operation mode.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 1A shows the interaction feedback force having a variable value within the inverted damping operation mode (between Vmin and Vmax) and the predetermined hold force corresponding to the holding force mode (between zero and Vmin). It is noted that Figure 1A shows that the predetermined hold force has a value higher than the interaction feedback force, as recited in the last three lines of Claim 18.

Turning to the applied art, Rosenberg discloses an interface device that allows a user to interface with a computer, and more particularly, a haptic feedback interface device that allows a user to interface with a graphical environment displayed by a computer.

Rosenberg shows in Figure 5c that a force 324 is decreasing with an increase of the speed and a force 322 is constant. The outstanding Office Action appears to take the position that force 324 corresponds to the claimed interaction feedback force and force 322 corresponds to the claimed predetermined hold force. Further, the Advisory Action interprets Rosenberg as showing that a value of force 324 within the interval V_1 and V_2 is different than a value of force 322, i.e., the value of force 324 exactly at the point corresponding to V_1 is not the value of force 322.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the asserted inverted damping operation mode in Rosenberg includes the border values V_1 and V_2, and thus, the force 324 within this mode is equal to force 322 at the V_1 point. In other words, there is no basis in Rosenberg or in the outstanding Office Action to exclude the values V_1 and V_2 from the asserted damping mode.

Based on this interpretation of the asserted damping mode of Rosenberg, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 18 recites that the predetermined hold force is *higher* than the interaction feedback force while Figure 5c of Rosenberg shows that the force 322 is *equal* to the force 324 at the point where 322 meets 324, i.e., within the claimed inverted damping operation mode.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 18 and each of the claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over Rosenberg.

If the next Office Action maintains that points V_1 and V_2 are not part of the asserted inverted damping operation mode in Rosenberg, Applicants respectfully request that the next Office Action establishes the basis for excluding points V_1 and V_2 from the asserted damping mode.

In addition, Claim 35 has been added to more clearly recite that "an absolute force value of an interaction feedback force or a vectorial component thereof is increased in a

position dependent form, in a step fashion, to a predetermined hold force value or above." As shown in Figures 1A and 1B, the absolute force is not continuous with the force within the interval V_{min} and V_{max} but rather there is a step-like discontinuity between the two forces.

On the contrary, Figure 5c of <u>Rosenberg</u> shows that forces 322 and 324 are continuous at the inflexion point V_1.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 35 patentably distinguishes over <u>Rosenberg</u>.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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